SENATE—*Wednesday, October 6, 1999*

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Lord, God, speak to us so that what we speak may have the ring of reality and the tenor of truth.

You have granted the Senators the gift of words. May they use this gift wisely today. Help them to speak words that inspire and instruct. Keep them from glibness—from easy words that change little—or from harsh words that cause discord. Enable them to say what they mean and then mean what they say, so that they are able to stand by their words with integrity. And since the world listens so carefully to what is said here in this Chamber, guide the Senators to differ without denigration and communicate without condemnation. May they judge each other's ideas but never each other's values. In this way, may the Senate exemplify to the world how to maintain unity in diversity and the bond of patriotism in the search for Your best for America. Dear God, help us to listen to You and to each other. In Your all-powerful name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable CHUCK HAGEL, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HAGEL). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

RECOGNITIONS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, permit me to comment about how good it is to have Reverend Ogilvie back with us, looking so well after his recent bout with the doctors and the hospital, one which he and I share. It is nice to have Reverend Ogilvie back.

Let me compliment our distinguished President pro tempore for opening the Senate this morning so hale and hardy.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. I thank the Senator very much.

SCHEDULE

Mr. SPECTER. On behalf of the leader, I have been asked to announce that the Senate will resume consideration of the pending Nickles amendment on the Labor-HHS bill regarding the Social Security trust fund. It is hoped that Senators who have filed amendments will work with the bill managers. What we propose to do is continue to alternate, and we are going to seek time agreements of 30 minutes equally divided so that we can move ahead and complete the bill. We have contentious amendments which are pending on both sides. We are working on the Republican side to try to have these amendments considered with very short time agreements, or reasonably short time agreements so that we can proceed.

We have the obligation to finish this bill, or at least the expectation of finishing this bill by the close of business tomorrow. There are dinners both Wednesday evening, this evening, and tomorrow evening which will keep our sessions not too long unless we establish a window, which we will have to do. And if a window is established, that means very late night sessions if we are to recess from 6:30, 7 o'clock, 8:30 or 9 o'clock. That is something to be avoided. We have culled down the amendments, and we think we are in a position to move ahead very promptly.

The leader has asked me also to announce that the Senate may consider conference reports to accompany the Agriculture appropriations bill and any other conference reports available during this week's session of the Senate.

Until one or two other Senators arrive, I would like to take a moment or two to comment about another matter of business, a very important matter, and that is the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, the President invited a number of Senators, both Democrats and Republicans, to the White House last night for dinner, including the distinguished Senator from Nebraska, who is now presiding. I had expressed a view publicly before the dinner began that I thought the vote on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty should be deferred; it should not be held on Tuesday. I have stated that position because it is plain that there are not enough votes in the Senate to pass the treaty. I favor the treaty. I said so publicly some time ago. I think it is also not timely to take up the treaty on the existing schedule because of the complexity of the issue.

Yesterday, the Armed Services Committee held 5 hours of hearings. I attended part of them. The subject matter is very complicated. It is my judgment that Senators are not really prepared to vote on the matter and that the vote may take on partisan overtones, political overtones, party partisan overtones, which I think would be very undesirable.

It has been reported publicly that all 45 Democrats are in favor of the treaty; that there are only a very few Republicans who are in favor of the treaty, and that many Senators on both sides have really not had an opportunity to study the treaty in depth to have positions which might lead some to disagree with the party position.

It is my thinking that it would be calamitous—a very strong word, but I think that is the right word—if the Senate were to reject the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. At the present time around the world, many eyebrows are raised because the Senate has not ratified the treaty. But if the Senate were to reject the treaty, then it would be highly publicized worldwide. It would be an open excuse for countries such as India and Pakistan to continue nuclear testing, which I think is very undesirable, destabilizing that area of the world, and give an excuse for rogue nations such as Iran, Iraq, Libya, and other rogue nations to test, and it would be very undesirable.

It is a complicated issue because our distinguished majority leader has scheduled the vote under a unanimous consent agreement with the minority leader after very substantial pressures have been building up with many floor statements demanding a vote.

The majority leader gave them what they asked for, and it was agreed to. It is not an easy matter to have that unanimous consent agreement vitiated. Any Senator can object to the vote. We will go ahead and schedule it. The administration has expressed the view it does not want to make a commitment to have no vote during the year 2000. The leader has propounded a substitute unanimous consent agreement, as I understand it—I wasn't on the floor at the time—which would vitiate the unanimous consent agreement on the condition that no vote be held in the year 2000.

The administration takes the position if they were to agree to that, or go along with it, that it would look as if they were backing off the treaty and it would be complicated for other world leaders as to how the administration would explain that kind of a position when we were pressing other nations to

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.